A Dialogue or ſpeaking together of two Perſonages of the which, the one is the *Well willing Comminaltie*, and the other the Noble and moſte puyſſant Prince, my Lorde the Duke of *Anion*.

OVR MOST REDOVBTED LORD,

&c.

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1582.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Ost gracious lord conſide-
ring that the gouernment
of countries hath bene al-
wayes eſteemed not onely
amongſt the Philoſophers
but alſo amongſt all nati-
ons, to be a matter of
great waight and impor-
tance, ſpecially when as a
Prince and Gouernour doth faythfully attende on
the ſame. Therefore now that we haue conceiued
ſuche hope of your highnes, we haue bene moued
firſtly in all reuerence to ſalute your highnes, and
thereafter as true ſubiectes to preſent and ſhewe
all obedience.

My Lord the Duke.

My louing friendes I thanke you hartely for
the loue and kindnes which you doe ſhewe vnto
me. And alſo do promiſe neuer to fruſtrate you,
nor make any default of the duetifull good con-
fidence which ye do beare to my perſon.

The well willing Comminaltie.

We looke for nothing elſe of your highnes, but
for the office of a good Prince. Which is to protect
and defend his ſubiectes from all wrong, outrage,
and violence. And to loue them as the father loueth
his children, and the ſhepeheard his ſheepe, which
doth venter his lyfe for to defend them.

My Lord the Duke.

My friendes you ſpeake very well and I will alſo feruently endeuour my ſelfe to the ſame, for I hope euen as you ſhall find me alwayes a benigne and fayrhfull Gouernour, that I lykewiſe ſhall haue you obedient ſubiects, for like as the father is bound to loue his children, and the ſhepheard his ſheepe, euen ſo the ſhepe likewiſe are bound to follow their ſhepeheard and ſhew him obedience.

The well willing Commynaltie.

Your highnes ſhall be hereof ynough aſſured hauing read ouer our auncient Conſequences and Chronicles. Wherein euery where is to be founde the greate affection which we naturally do beare to oure lawfull Princes and Lordes. But in caſe your highnes did vouchſafe to heare vs, it woulde not ſeeme vnto vs to be inconuenient, (becauſe your highnes ſhoulde haue knowledge of all thinges, which is mooſt needfull for well to adminiſter the gouernement of countries,) that we nowe ſpeaking togeather, might briefly diſcourſe or run ouer the eſtate of theſe our lowe countries, and the ſumme of things which theirin be paſſed ſince the beginning of the troubles vntill now.

My Lord the Duke.

My louing friendes, I am very well pleaſed to heare the ſame and that more is, I thinke it wholy neceſſary, to haue knowledge thereof. Bycauſe we might thereby in all thinges deale the more circũſpectly, to the welfare of the countrie, and

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the ſaluation of vs all. And therefore I requeſte you in no wiſe, to hide from me the knowledge of ſuch thinges.

The well willing Comminaltie.

Seeing that your highnes doth requeſte this of vs, we will gladly do the ſame, thanking the almighty god that it hath pleaſed him to ſend vs your highnes hence forward to protect and make vs free from the tyranny, intended to be brought vppon vs by our enemyes. Your highnes muſt firſtly vnderſtand that the king of ſpayne after the deceſe of the Emperour Charles the firſt of worthy memory. Of whom he hath receaued all theſe Lowe countries, forgetting the ſeruices, which aſwel his Lord and father as alſo he himſelf had receaued of theſe countries and the inhabitants of the ſame, wherby ſpecially the king of Spayne hath obtained ſo famous victories againſte his enemyes, that thereby his name and power became famous & feared through all the world. And forgetting alſo the admonition which the Emperours maieſtie aforeſayd had gyuen him at other times to the contrary he hath bent his eare, and gyuen credit to thoſe of the counſell of Spaine, being neare him which had conceyued in their hartes, and enuy againſt theſe countries and there freedomes. For that they might not haue any charge to gouerne in theſe countries, nor to beare the principall eſtates or offices as they did in the realmes of Naples, Sicilia, at Millan, in India, and at other places being vnder the kinges domi-

nion, whereof the moste part of them knewe the riches and power.

Which Counsell of Spayne or some of the principall thereof haue declared to this king at diuers times. That it was better for his Maiesties reputation, a newe to Conquere these countreys for to commaund thereouer freely and absolutely, (which is to playe the Tyrante according to his pleasure) then to be driuen to gouerne vnder such conditions, & restrictions as he hath ben faine to swere, in the acceptinge of the dominion of these countreys. According to ỹ which the king hath euer since sought by all meanes to bring the aforesaid countries from their ancient freedomes, and vnder a Tyrrannicall gouernment of the spaniards intēding firstly vnder the cloke of religion to putte in newe bishops in the cheefeste and moste principall Citties, giuing and endewing them with adiunction and incorporation of the moste Richeste Abbyes, and adioyning vnto them, nine *Canonicos or Regulars*, which should be of his Counsel. Whereof the three should haue speciall charg ouer the Inquisition. By which incorporation the saide Bishops (which might haue bene aswell straungers as Natiue of the Countreys) haue had the first places & voices in the assemblies of the estates of these countreys, And haue bene his creatures ready at his commaundement and deuotion: and shoulde haue brought in by the saide adioyned *Canonicos or Regulars*, the spanishe *Inquisition*: Which hath alwayes bene (as it is manifeste

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vnto al men) so horrible and odious in these Countreys as the verye bondage it selfe: In suche wise that the saide Imperiall Maiestie hauing at other times proponed the same to the countreis he did let it rest again, by reason of the remonstrations which were done against it vnto his Maiestie, therin shewing the affection which he did beare to his subiects. But howbeit diuers remonstrations which be done vnto the King by word of mouth as well by perticuler Prounces and Cities, as also by some of the principall Lordes of the Countrye, viz. The Lord of Montingni, and the Earle of Egmont, being sent to *Spayn* to that purpose at sundry times by the consent of the Duches of Parma then Gouernant ouer the same countreyes by the aduise of the Counsell of Estates and Generalitie. And also that the sayd king of *Spayne* had giuen vnto them by word of mouth good hope to prouide therein, according to their request, he notwithstanding to the contrarye thereof, shortly thereafter sharpely by Letters vpon his indignation cõmaunded to receiue the Bishops, and to place thẽ in possession of their Bishoprickes, and incorporated Abbies, To giue the Inquisition her course, where it thertofore had bene, and to follow the ordinance of the Counsel of Trent. Which was in many poyntes contrary to the Priuiledges of the aforesaid countreis, which thing being come to the knowledge of the Comminaltie, hath with good reason caused occasion of great commotion amongst them: and an alienation of the good affecti-

on which they alwayes as good subiects haue borne to the sayde king of *Spayne* and his Predecessors. Specially considering that not onely hee did go about to play the Tyrant vpō their persons & goods, but also vpon their consciences, of the whiche they thinke to be bound to giue reckoning, or make answere vnto no body but only vnto God.

For which cause, and for pitie of the sayd Cominaltie, the principall of the Countreys haue exhibited a certaine Remonstration in the yeare, 1565. Requesting that for to still the Cominaltie, and preuent al Seditions, his Maiestie should asswage these poyntes, and speciallye concerning the rigorous Inquisition and punishment of the Religion; shewing therewith the loue and affection whiche he as a benigne Prince did beare vnto his subiectes, and for to notifie the same vnto the sayde king of *Spaine* more nearer, and with more authoritie, and for to proove how necessarye the same was for the welfare of the countreis, and to maintain the same in quietnesse, to put or leaue of such nouelties, and mittigate the rigor of the general Petition of the Placcat in matters concerning the Religion at the request of the sayd Gouernant, Counsell of the Estates, and of the generall estates of all the countreys, were sent to *Spaine* as Ambassadors, The Marquis of *Berghen*, and the Lord of *Montingni* afore named, But in steede to giue attendaunce vnto them, and to prouide in the inconueniences whiche there had bene propounded, which by delaying of

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the remedye in due tyme, accoyding as the neede requited, did alreadie begin to appeare or shew themselues almost in all Countreies, amongst the Congregation, he by the alluring of the Spanish Counsell, hath caused the sayd persons which had made the aforesaid Remonstration, to be declared Rebels and to be guiltie of the crime of Treason, and consequently to be punished in bodye and goodes. And moreouer he thinking thereafter that the sayd Countreys were wholy subdued vnder his subiection and Tirannye, by the power of the Duke of *Alba*, caused the sayd Lords Ambassadors to be apprehended, murdered, and their goodes confisked, contrary to all common orders, or lawes, which alwayes haue bene inuiolately obserued amongest the most cruell and tyrannicall Princes. And howbeit that the greatest troubles risen in the sayde Countries, by the dealing of the sayde Gouernante and her Adherentes, in the sayd yeare 1566. was agayne pacified, and many driuen away which did vnderstand the freedomes of the countreis, and the rest oppressed and subdued in such wise, that the king had no cause at all to oppresse the sayd Countreis by force of Weapons, yet notwithstanding, to haue such an occasion which the sayde Spanish counsell of long tyme had soughte and looked for, accoyding to the same is playnelye declared by the intercepted and detayned letters of Alana, the Ambassador of *Spayne*, resident in *Fraunce*, being at that time written to the Duches of *Parma* for to anothe-

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late all the Priuiledge of the Countreis, and to gouern the same according to hir wil, tirannically by the *Spainiardes* as the *Indians* and the new conquered Landes: He by the motion and counsell of the sayd *Spainiardes*, shewing the little loue whiche he bare to his good subiectes, contrary to that whiche he as their Prince, Protector and good sheapheard was bound to do. Hath sent towards the said countreyes for to oppresse them with a great armie the Duke of *Alba*, being infamous of hardnesse and cruelcie, & one of the principall enemies of the coũtrey: and being, for to be his Counsellors, accompanyed with persons of like nature and humoures. Which haue executed such innumerable deale of cruelties and tirannies vpon these Countreis, that the same woulde bee to long before your highnesse here to be rehearsed. And thereafter the great Cõmandador (whome the King of *Spaine* did sende to these Countreis after the Duke of *Alba* not for to amend ought, but for to prosecute the sayde way of tiranny by a more secrete meane which haue compelled the other countreis whiche they kepte vnder the Spanish subiection with their Garrisons and built Castels, for to vse all their persons and might for to helpe to oppresse them, shewing notwithstanding vnto the said countreis which they did employ in their assistaunce as is aforesayd, no more fauoure then if they had ben their very enimies, permitting that the *Spainiardes* vnder ỹ cloke that they were in sedition before the face of the great Cõmandador,

forcibly

forcibly did enter into the Citie of *Antwerpe* there according to their discretion to waste and spend for the space of sixe weekes at the charges of the Citizens, constrayning furthermore in the meane tyme the sayde Citizens because they shoulde be discharged of the violence of the same *Spainiardes* to furnish to the payment of foure hundred thousand gyldens, their demaunded wages, and also thereafter the spanishe souldiers vsing a greater boldnes haue aduaunced themselues publikelye to take vp their weapons agaynst the countrey, thinking firstly to take the citie of *Brussels*, and in place of the ordinary residence of the Prince of the Countreis beeing there, to make their Caue of robberie, whiche thing not succeeding vnto them, they haue ouerthrowne the Citie of *Aelst*, and thereafter forciblye taken, sacked, spoyled, murdered, and burned the Citie of *Maestricht* and *Antwerpe*, aforesayd, and so handled the same that the most cruell and Tyrannicall enemies of the Countreis can not doe any more nor worse, to the vnspeakable domage not only of the inhabitants, but also almost of all the Nations of the world, which there had their wares and money. And howbeit that the sayd *Spainiardes* by the counsell of Estates (by whome at that tyme by reason of the death of the great Comandador was accepted the Gouernmente of the Countreis by the charge and commission of the king of Spayne) were declared and published for enemies of the Land in the presence of Ieronimo de Rhoda, for the outrage,

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force and violēce which they vsed, yet the said *Rhoda* by his owne authority, or else (as it is to be presumed) by vertue of some secret Instructiō which he might haue frō *Spaine*, had taken vpon him to be the Chiefe or heade of these *Spainguartes* and their associated, And without to haue respecte to these counsell of Estates to vse the name and authoritie of the king to counterfaite his seale, and to behaue himselfe publikelye as gouernoure and Liefetenaunt of the king, whereby the estates were caused to make agreement at this time with my Lorde the Prince and estate of Hollande and Zerlande, whiche agreement hath bene approued and bene found to be good by the councell of the estates and lawfull Gouernours of the countreis, for ioyntly and with one accord to set vppon and driue out of the countreys the *Spainguartes* as common enimies of the Countreys. Neuerthelesse not pretermitting as good subiectes in the meane while with all dilligence by diuers humble remonstrations to the king of *Spaine* and at fyt and possible meanes to sue and beseeke the king that hee taking regarde and consideration on the troubles and inconueniences which alreadye were happened in these countreys, and yet were likelye to happen. It might please him to cause the *Spainguartes* to departe out of the countreys and punnish them which haue bene occasion of the spoile and ruine of his principall Cities, and other vnspeakeable outrages, which his subiects haue sustained: for the consolation of those on whome the same had fal-

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len, and for an example to other. But the king although hee fayned with wordes that the same was chaunced against his will and pleasure, and that he did intend to punish their cheifes, and forthwith for the quietnesse of the Countery to be willinge to appoint some order with all fauoure as it becõmeth to a prince. Yet notwithstanding the same he hath not onely caused Iustice nor punishement to be administred against them, but contrary wise it doth sufficiently by his deeds apeare, that al was don with his consent, and by a proceading spanishe Counsell, as the samewithin a while after found out by certaine Intercepted, and detained letters, that by the king himselfe had bene written to *Rhodas*, and other Captaines (being an occasion of the aforesaide mischeife) that he not onely founde their doinges good but did praise them for the same and promised to make recompence, especyally to the said *Rhodas*, as hauing done a singular seruice vnto him, euen as also he hath shewen the same in deedes, at his return in *Spaine*, vnto him, and to all other his seruiters of the saide tyrranny, which haue bene in these countreis. And the kinge also at the same time (minding so muche the more to blind the eyes of his subiects) did send as Gouernour in the said countries, his bastard brother Don Iohn D'austrya as one ỹ was of his bloode who vnder the cloake that hẽ did finde good and approue the agreement which was made at Gaunt, the promise to defend the Estates, the *Spainguartes* to departe and becauſe ỹ auctors of

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the violence and discordes which bee done in these countries to bee punished, And to take order for the common quietnesse of the countries and the anncient lyberties, did go aboute to deuide the said Estates, and to subdewe the one countrey after the other, which thing euen as that which is fainedlye done and with outward shewe against, the meaning cannot longe continue secrete. So likewise the same breakinge out before he had fully compassed his Intention. He could not performe the same according to his purpose, but he in steade of peace stirred and rayled vp newe warre, wherof hee did boast at his comming. and which as yet doth indure, we hauing resisted the same, according that reason doth greatly moue vs therunto. Here you haue heard most gracious Lord the principall matters which be chaunced in these our lowe Countreis during the time of the aforesaid troubles and therfore we beseech you with all reuerence, That seeing youre entring is moste hartily welcome vnto vs, it maye please you to receaue vs in youre protection, and to execute at all times on vs the Office of a good Prince.

My Lord the Duke.

Therof my louing friendes you nede not in any wise to doubt as long as it shall please the alightie God to graunt me his grace.

The well willing Comminaltie.

We

We beseech the almighty God that it may please him here vnto to preserue your highnes, and to grant vs togeather much ioy, and aduauncement, that we may spedely see the enemy conquered by our handes.

Finis Coronat opus.